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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

5 December 1952

MEMORANDUM TO THE BOARD

Attached is an alternative version of NIE-64 (Part I) Supplement. In substance, it is the same as the 4 December draft. This new version is imposed on you only because I believe that the form of the 4 December draft, requiring constant reference back to the basic estimate, will be confusing, if not exasperating, to the reader.

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DOCUMENT NO. _____
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. 1
[] DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S © 1991
NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 10 Apr 81 REVIEWER: 6514

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C E N T R A L I N T E L L I G E N C E A G E N C Y

5 December 1952

SUBJECT: NIE-64 (Part I) SUPPLEMENT: SOVIET BLOC CAPABILITIES,
THROUGH MID-1954

THE PROBLEM

To extend through mid-1954 certain key estimates concerning Soviet Bloc* capabilities for political and military warfare made in NIE-64 (Part I).

Note: NIE-64 (Part I) contains an estimate of Soviet Bloc capabilities through mid-1953. This Supplement sets forth the changes and additions required to extend through mid-1954 the most important estimates contained in NIE-64 (Part I).

* The Soviet Bloc consists on the USSR, the European Satellites, Communist China, Outer Mongolia, North Korea, and Viet Minh. The Kremlin also controls the international Communist movement outside the Bloc countries.

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CONCLUSIONS

Take in text of paragraphs 1-11a of 4 December draft of NIE-64 (Part I) Supplement.

DISCUSSION

I. Factors Affecting Bloc Capabilities

1. USSR accomplishments in the fields of electronics and communications were mentioned in NIE-64 (Part I) and discussed at more length in Appendix A-II of that estimate. In this Supplement, which extends to mid-1954 certain key estimates of NIE-64 (Part I), we consider it important to make specific mention of these capabilities, as presently existing and as projected for the longer period.

a. Take in text of paragraph 12 of 4 December draft of NIE-64 (Part I) Supplement.

b. Take in text of paragraph 13 of 4 December draft.

2. We estimate that the gross national product of the Bloc increased roughly 20 percent between 1949 and 1951 and that rapid growth will continue through mid-1954. We estimate that total production of the USSR was in 1951 at least one-third higher than in 1948. We estimate that,

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both in the USSR and in the Satellites, gross national product has been increasing at an annual rate of about 11 percent and will continue to increase, although at a somewhat reduced rate, through mid-1954.

3. Disparities between the output of the economies of the US and the NATO states on the one hand, and the USSR and the Bloc on the other, are being reduced, but there will be no significant change by mid-1954.

4. We estimate that the USSR now devotes and will continue to devote about one-fifth of its gross national product to military expenditures.

II. Bloc Military Strength (paragraphs 23-28 of NIE-64 (Part I))

5. We estimate that the Bloc armed forces by mid-1954 will probably have:

a. Approximately 9,400,000 men, of which about 4,520,000 will be Soviet; 2,000,000 Satellite; 2,450,000 Chinese Communist; 300,000 North Korean; and 130,000 Viet Minh.

b. An authorized strength of about 26,700 aircraft, including about 13,000 jet fighters, 1,250 piston medium bombers, and possibly a few jet medium bombers. (Repeat footnote 3 on page 4 of original text.)

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c. A total of approximately 260 major surface vessels* and 471 submarines, including 153 long-range types.

d. A stockpile of 190 atomic weapons (30-100 kiloton yield). (The actual figure may be from half to twice as many as this estimate.)

6. In NIE-64 (Part I) we estimated it as unlikely that the USSR would be able to develop and produce a thermonuclear weapon by mid-1953. However, we believe that the USSR will continue to make progress toward a thermonuclear weapon, and that field testing concerned with thermonuclear reactions may take place by mid-1954.

7. In NIE-64 we estimated that, although the effectiveness of Bloc air defenses would improve through re-equipment and training, the numerical strength of the air defense forces would not change by mid-1953. We estimate that by mid-1954 the numerical strength of these forces will increase, though not substantially, and that the improvement in effectiveness through re-equipment and training will continue.

III. Bloc Military Capabilities (paragraphs 29-37 of NIE-64 (Part 1))

8. In NIE-64 we estimated that in the period to mid-1953, improvements in the Bloc air defense system would be especially

* This includes all naval vessel types down to and including coastal destroyers.

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marked in the USSR, Eastern Germany, Poland, and Manchuria.
We estimate that, by mid-1954, this marked improvement will
extend throughout Eastern Europe. However, even through
mid-1954, deficiencies will remain throughout the Bloc.

9. In NIE-64 we estimated that, through mid-1953, the
offensive capability of the Communist Air Force in China
would remain largely confined to limited attacks against
UN forces in Korea and adjacent waters. We estimate that,
by mid-1954, the introduction of jet light bombers will
give this air force the capability to extend its offensive
operations further.*

IV. Bloc Political Warfare Capabilities (paragraphs 42-52 of
NIE-64 (Part I)).

10,11,12. Take in text of paragraphs 23-25 of 4 December
draft of NIE-64 (Part I) Supplement.

* This increased capability should be stated in more specific
terms (e.g. "to Taiwan and Southeast Asia")

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